



Utica United
Methodist Church

Weekly Messenger

December 8, 2023

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"December Thoughts..."

I write today to share a few things with you that are on my mind.

First, I want to remind you that as the end of the year is approaching, we want to finish the year in a solid financial position. We only have \$9,500.00 left to pay for our obligations to the Conference. The amount isn't tiny, but neither is it big when compared to the starting amount asked of us. I'd like us to raise this extra amount before the end of the year and finish strong. We have a long history of meeting our obligations, and if we can do so again this year, the amount asked of us for the following year will decrease again. Let's dig deep, friends!

Second, I want to be absolutely sure you know the worship schedule for December 24th. We will have a 9:30 am service, a 10:30 am service, and an 8 pm candlelight service.

Third, we will close out our celebration of 200 years of ministry with a joint worship service at 9:30 am in the sanctuary on December 31st, followed by a brunch-style meal in Fellowship Hall. Look for sign-up sheets soon!

Fourth, I am so grateful for the many gifts we have been blessed to have received this year. I hope you, too, feel an appreciation for and excitement about our celebration year. We will evaluate the celebration in January and determine which events need to come back because of the blessings we and our community received through them. We will also discuss gifts and how we can use them in the new year.

I look forward to worshipping with you on Sunday!

Peace,

Rev. Don

Mini Pantry

Thank you to all who continue to support the Mini Pantry. Our church continues to be a blessing to our neighborhood and those suffering from food and hygiene insecurities. We are collecting cans of tuna, chicken and Vienna sausages (can) throughout December. Place your items in the Wagon of Hope.

Utica United
Methodist Church

8650 Canal Road,
Sterling Heights, MI

(586) 731-7667

www.UticaUMC.org

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Happy 200th Birthday Utica UMC!

Utica United Methodist Church is 200 years old this year. We have many things planned to celebrate this wonderful milestone. Please consider inviting your friends and family or neighbors to the different events we will be having. This is a great way to reach out to our community and extend an invitation to someone new.

Please mark your calendars as we look ahead....

December -

- 9th-10th - Cookie Walk
- Christmas Eve 9:30am - "Three Perspectives"
- Christmas Eve 10:30am - A Family Christmas Celebration - "The First Christmas"
- Christmas Eve 8:00pm - Candlelight, Carols and Handbells
- December 31st - 1 Service at 9:30 followed by a brunch in Fellowship Hall

Christmas Eve Morning
9:30am - Sanctuary
"Three Perspectives"



Christmas Eve Morning
10:30am - Fellowship Hall
"The First Christmas"



Christmas Eve
8:00pm - Sanctuary
Candlelight, Carols and Bells



United Women in Faith

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, December 13th in Fellowship Hall. We will begin with a potluck luncheon at noon. Bring a dish to share and your place setting as well as something for the mini pantry.

At 1:00pm we will have a program entitled **"Mary's Christmas Story."** All women are welcome to attend.

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER



The loss of a loved one is not easy. It may be hard for you to feel optimistic about the future right now. When you've lost a spouse, child, family member, or friend, you've probably found there are not many people who understand the deep hurt you feel.

This can be a confusing time when you feel isolated and have many questions about things you've never faced before.

"Going to GriefShare feels like having warm arms wrapped around you when you're shivering."

GriefShare will return to Utica United Methodist Church on:
Thursday, January 18th 2024 at 6:30 PM in Fellowship Hall

If you or anyone you know could benefit from attending GriefShare contact:

Bob or Patsy Clark

or

Register at: www.griefshare.org/findagroup



It's hard to believe we've had an active Celebrate Recovery Group at Utica United Methodist Church for a full four years. This Christ centered ministry has changed so many lives, offered so many opportunities to help others get over the things that they need to get over.

Celebrate Recovery is a safe place, a place where it's OK not to be OK. We have a saying at Celebrate Recovery **"No perfect people allowed. All others are welcome."**

Join us on January 4, 2024 as we enter year five. We meet each Thursday at 6:30 PM in Fellowship Hall.

Let the healing begin!

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Coats for Kids

My friend at the elementary school has a coat closet for the students and they are in need of some coats especially for their older students. If you have any gently used girls or boys coats or would like to purchase a coat for a child, I am looking for larger size coats. Boys and Girls Large, XL or XXL and Men's or Women's small or medium. If you are cupboard cleaning and have some smaller coats, they will accept those as well. Please bring to church by Sunday, December 10th, so they can be delivered and handed out to those students who need a coat. You can drop off to the office or leave at the coat rack outside the office.

Thank you!

Quilt Raffle

There is currently an online raffle happening for a quilt made from fabric bought and brought back from Pastor Don's trip last year to Africa. The proceeds of the raffle will be used in the purchase of construction material for projects that will be worked on in January. The raffle is online - please follow the link <https://dewinggoods.betterworld.org/giveaways/guinea-bissau-team-2024-quilt> or scan the QR code. The raffle is open until 8pm on December 15th and the drawing will take place at 9pm on December 15th. An e-mail address is needed when you purchase the raffle tickets as that is where you will receive a confirmation of your ticket as well as to be notified should you win the quilt.



THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

The Good Times

I was talking with a young friend the other day and she mentioned that this week would be “Family cookie baking” and how she was dreading it. It is an all-day project, and she is tired and sore from being on her feet the rest of the week and not how she wanted to spend a day off. Besides the cookies never tasted as good as they once did when she was younger. Something that had been a delightful and fun filled event had turned into a chore to be done and over. She talked about when her grandma was there and the fun in the kitchen. How they all went at it with enthusiasm but now Grandma was gone, one sister had moved out of state, her sister-in-law would be there, and they did not get along, her mother had her own way of doing things and was bossy, the list of complaints went on and on. I began dreading the event and I was not even involved! I told her that I could not relate to her experience because my mother and I had never baked together or made cookies together or did much of anything together. She did spend time in the kitchen with my Sister-in-law, but I was not wanted in the kitchen. My Mother had determined that I was hopeless and would one day starve to death. I did not hold the spoon correctly, I could never mix an ingredient properly, I was utterly useless to her in the kitchen. When my brother married, she found the daughter she yearned for. They would spend hours making goodies, one would make an Angel Food Cake with the egg whites and the other would use the yokes for a sponge cake. They were in synch with each other, and I was liberated. They crocheted together; I could not crochet because I did not hold the hook properly according to my mother. So, I purchased a How to Knit book and taught myself to knit. I learned to cook in Home Ec, and I was allowed to cook on Saturday evenings when I could make Hamburgers with the rule that my mother could not come in the kitchen. In later years she would praise the food I prepared when they came to dinner but still was not allowed in the kitchen when I was cooking. She discovered I could make a Meringue pie that was wonderful while she had always had trouble with her Meringue. I felt sorry for my young friend and suggested that what she was really dreading was the loss of those she loves. She is going to the cookie baking, and I hope she draws strength from the memories of what was and what is now. I know she will not regret taking one day out of 365 to make her mother happy because her mother wanted and needed her there one more time. Jesus did as he was told and pleased his mother.

John 2:3-11 When the wine was gone Jesus’ mother said to him, “They have no more wine.” “Dear woman, why do you involve me?” Jesus replied, “My time has not yet come.” His Mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.” Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, “Fill the jars with water” so they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, “Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet.” They did so and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside and said, “Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best for now.

Lord be with us this holiest of seasons, be with our families may we appreciate the joy of being together and all our special memories. Be with our Pastor, bless his ministry and his family. Be with those who are ill and those who grieve. Be with our church may we be the hands and feet of Jesus. Be with those who are mourning the loss of young lives in a senseless school shooting yet again. May the survivors feel your comfort and give them strength. Be with those who have suffered in the tornados this week. Be with our staff and leaders, give them guidance and direction. We thank you Lord for the food we eat, the shelter of our homes, and especially for your love that sustains us. In Jesus name we pray. Amen

Grace Epperson

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

SUNDAY WORSHIP TIMES:

9:30AM

with Organ, Choir and Handbells
in the Sanctuary

10:30AM

with our Worship Band
in Fellowship Hall

Online Worship

A recorded service will be
available online on
Facebook, our church website and
on YouTube beginning at
9:00am each Sunday.

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday - Friday
8:00am-2:00pm

Mini Pantry

Food and Monetary
Donations are being
accepted.

Suggested foods are eat
and go items (tuna packs;
cracker items; granola
bars; fruit cups; salty
snacks

Keep Connected

If you are not signed up for our
Weekly Messenger email, you
can do so on our website by
clicking on the "More" tab, then
"Weekly Messenger"; on that
page you will find a place to
register for our weekly email!



*"Like" us
on
Facebook!*

Our Mission

Inviting people to rely
on Jesus to find
unexpected purpose,
peace and joy.

Ministry Team

Rev. Don Gotham
srpastor@uticaumc.org

Music Ministry

David Fox, Organist, Bell, & Chancel Choirs
Director

FoxDavidL@sbcglobal.net

Mer Renne, Contemporary
Worship Leader
mer@uticaumc.org

Communications Director/Bookkeeper

Rachelle Heldt
rachelle@uticaumc.org

Deadline Information

Articles for advertising/
announcements must be submitted to
the office by 3:00pm on
Wednesday of each week.

Messenger: Email to Rachelle Heldt

Prayer List: Email to Rachelle Heldt
or call the church office.



Going on vacation; can't make it to church?

How about using E-giving so you can still give your offering for
those times when you can't be here **The E-giving tab is on our
church website: www.uticaumc.org**
If you need assistance, call the church office.

Celebrate Recovery, Thursday, 6:30pm

